

Your Business Matters

July 2019

SOAKING UP THE SUN

A Trip to the Keys, a New Ride, and Everything in Between

With summer in full swing, all business owners (even the most serious of attorneys) need to take a break at some point. That's why I was so excited to head down to the Keys for a couple days in June with a childhood friend of mine. After all the deals and negotiations we've done in the recent months, it was nice to unplug for a while and enjoy nature. Trips like these make me appreciate the majesty of the great state of Florida. I hope you too will find the time this summer to stop, relax, and recharge.

For this trip, I met up with a friend of mine who I had been close with since we were 12 years old, and we shuttled over to Curry Hammock State Park to soak up the sun. The main objective of our trip was to get some quality kayaking in. By the end of it, we had logged enough hours to last until next summer. Growing up, he and I always had a special connection with the outdoors. His family would take me

with them to upstate New York, and we'd always find a way to entertain ourselves. In many ways, this trip was no different. We ended up smack dab in the middle of the Keys. Not a bad destination if you ask me.

We found ourselves some shallow water to post up in and split our time between kayaking and biking the trails. We peacefully spent our five-day excursion away from the sights and sounds of the city. Not much has changed since I went to the Keys nearly a decade ago, thank goodness. That area is truly a special place. Unfortunately, that made the adjustment back to normal life all the more difficult. After we got back in the beginning of June, I was quickly whisked away to close out some business deals, but I couldn't stop thinking back to the memories of those days on the water. Even so, the summer isn't over yet. There's still plenty to look forward to. The Fourth of July means bikes, barbecues, and beers around our house — always in moderation of course. So, we've still got some fun to be had in our neck of the woods.

With the weather on our side, now I'm excited for biking and scalloping. I recently picked up a new Trek 920 bicycle to help feed my hobby and/or addiction. Unfortunately, Faith only agreed to let me buy it if I got rid of two of the other bikes I have. It wasn't a bad compromise — this new toy is built for on-road and off-road. As for



the scallops, there is nothing quite like scallop season on the Nature Coast. With the Gulf of Mexico staying so shallow, it's a blast to wade out there, get a little snorkeling in, and pick your own to bring home for dinner. All this adds up to another great summer here in Florida. As for us here at Alexander Abramson, there are big things on the horizon. I recently spoke at the annual Florida Bar Convention in Boca Raton on the nuances of making your law firm a salable asset, and we've had some really great feedback from the attendees.

No matter how you're choosing to spend your summer, we want to help you and your business rest easy. For all your business law needs, give us a call at (407) 649-7777 or visit our website anytime at AlexanderAbramson.com.

-Ed Alexander



THE BEST CONTEMPORARY AD CAMPAIGNS

And What You Can Learn From Them

A great advertising campaign transcends the company that creates it. The Budweiser Clydesdales are nearly as iconic as the beer itself. People still say, “Dude, you’re getting a Dell,” in 2019, despite the fact that PCs aren’t even a major part of Dell’s business model anymore. When it comes to creating an ad campaign that Don Draper would be proud of, it’s best to look at massively successful examples from recent history. Here are a few of our favorites, as well as commentary on why they work and how you can use similar tactics.

BRAND DIFFERENTIATION: APPLE

This mega-popular ad campaign consisting of 66 spots personified the difference between PCs and Apple computers. Playing the role of “PC” was a buttoned-up, nebbish character you’d expect to find in the most morose workplace on earth. The “Mac” character, by contrast, was laid-back, youthful, and effortlessly cool. After launching the campaign in 2006, Macs became the default laptop for nearly every incoming college student. Clearly, the lighthearted jabbing at the competition worked.

OFF-THE-WALL IRREVERENCE: OLD SPICE

Most deodorant and shampoo commercials are bare-bones basic. They describe the “odor protection,” “moisturizing effects,” and the like. Old Spice takes the opposite approach. Their ads often feature absurd imagery, insane special effects, and Terry Crews literally yelling at you that you smell bad. Would this tone work for a life insurance company? Probably not, but it’s a great way to make simple consumer goods feel fun and exciting.

SOCIAL AWARENESS: DOVE

Dove’s “Campaign for Real Beauty,” which launched in 2004, was a long overdue change of pace for the beauty industry. Since time immemorial, fashion and beauty campaigns featured only impossibly beautiful women who had body types that the average person could never attain. Dove threw this aspirational, and potentially toxic, messaging in the garbage and decided to celebrate women of all shapes and sizes. If you can create a campaign that includes those who aren’t used to widespread representation, you’ll increase your reach in a hurry.

CURATED COOL: DOS EQUIS

Here’s a dirty little secret the beverage industry won’t tell you: Most industrially produced beers are made by one of two companies, and the vast majority of them taste remarkably similar. The difference, for the most part, comes down to the way they are marketed. Dos Equis, with their “Most Interesting Man in the World” campaign, carved out a name for themselves as the beer for urbane, thrill-seeking drinkers, despite the fact that their product is about as exotic as a Coors Light. Sometimes, perception really is reality.



'FIERCE CONVERSATIONS'

*Learn How to Get
Your Message Across*

So often, we talk to our friends, coworkers, and loved ones without actually saying anything. We'll beat around the bush on important subjects or hesitate to bring up sensitive matters. Global business coach and best-selling author Susan Scott has set out to change that. In her book “Fierce Conversations,” Scott argues that the key to get more out of our personal and professional relationships is to learn to lower our barriers and convey our message honestly.

“Fierce Conversations” is one of those works born out of a simple idea with big implications. As the author explains it, “While no single conversation is guaranteed to change the trajectory of a career, a company, a relationship, or a life, any single conversation can.” By having the communication skills necessary to create lasting bonds, handle strong emotions, and overcome barriers, you’ll be prepared when crucial conversations present themselves.

Those who tend to judge a book by its cover may make the mistake of associating the word “fierce” with “aggressive.” However, as a master of meaningful communication, Scott has found that it’s important not to force emotions one way or the other. As she observes, “If your behavior contradicts your values, your body knows.” Instead of relying on fake bravado or false modesty, the author argues it’s better that the bravery be genuine. Breaking down those social barriers to be authentic in our conversations takes true ferocity.

Scott does more than simply explain why frank and honest communication is important; she gives readers the tools to get there. Having spent years as a business coach, and now as the head of a firm that trains CEOs around the globe, Scott is well-versed in the art of teaching exercises. “Fierce Conversations” is brimming with action items, tactics, and tailor-made examples of how to communicate in every situation, from board meetings to parenting. If you’re someone who likes concrete guides over vague concepts, this book will pleasantly surprise you.

Take Advantage of the Summer

And Host a Great Company Picnic

Are you tired of watching perfect summer days pass your office by from the wrong side of the window? Instead of leaving work to enjoy the weather, bring your company outside! A company picnic is the perfect opportunity to take advantage of the warm weather and foster team camaraderie through awards, team-building exercises, and, of course, good food. Putting on a slam-bang company picnic is no easy feat, but if you start with these three fundamentals, you'll be well on your way to pulling off an event the whole company will remember for years to come.

PICNIC THEME

The first step to organizing a company picnic is to choose a theme your employees will be excited about. From a Hawaiian luau to a country western barbecue, the possibilities are endless. To generate more hype at the office, you can hand out fun invitations that go along with the theme, like lei necklaces or custom sunglasses. At the actual picnic, the theme should influence your setup, team-building exercises, activities, and food and drink.

PICNIC LOCATION

Large public parks can easily accommodate big groups, but if you're in a pinch, you can also use your company campus. If you have enough in your budget, you can rent a venue nearby that works with your theme. Make sure your location has enough seating for everyone and keep track of the weather reports for that day if you're grilling outside.

PICNIC FOOD/DRINK

Let's not forget the most important part of a good company picnic — the food! First, you need to consider what type of picnic will go best with your theme. Will this picnic be a potluck, or will the food be catered? Will alcohol be allowed at the picnic? If so, will the company provide it, or will it be BYOB? When in doubt, just choose the realistic option for your budget and remember to stick with your theme.

Ultimately, the purpose of your company picnic is to give your employees opportunities to bond outside the office and celebrate one another through awards and team building. Follow the above tips and your company picnic will go off without a hitch!



HAVE A *Laugh*



PUZZLE

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9	5	2	3	6	7	1	8	4
8	3	4	9	1	5	7	2	6
4	6	8	2	7	1	3	5	9
3	2	5	6	4	9	8	7	1
7	1	9	8	5	3	4	6	2

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Yelp and Small Business

Does the Review Site Do More Harm Than Good?

“Yelp is destroying my small business.” These words are becoming more and more common. Small-business owners are taking their stories public, claiming Yelp is hurting their brand. But is this true? Can Yelp harm businesses?

At a glance, Yelp is a website and app where people can promote their businesses, and consumers can post reviews of those businesses. Yelp can be a consumer’s deciding factor in which restaurant to visit, which cleaning service to hire, which grocery store to shop at, and so on.

Business owners claim that Yelp tries to extort them. For example, Yelp calls a business to sell ads. The business declines and, suddenly, good reviews get buried. Some business owners have even claimed that the best reviews disappear altogether. In their place are the lowest reviews, or even poor reviews that weren’t there before. When people search for the business, the worst reviews are front and center.

Additionally, business owners have noted that Yelp cold-called them with the news that they have won an award for exceptional reviews. However, Yelp charges for the award, which is a plaque that can be displayed in the business, costing hundreds of dollars.



While the second example certainly isn’t extortion, it raises questions. The fact is that Yelp does cold-call businesses to get them to sign up for advertising packages, and in this, Yelp has leverage. If you don’t comply, they can alter what people see when they search for your business.

Business owners also point to discrepancies in reviews on Google, Facebook, and Yelp. They may have four- or five-star reviews on Google and Facebook, but their Yelp reviews may be noticeably lower.

It’s no secret that advertisements represent Yelp’s primary source of revenue, and cold-calling businesses can help drive that revenue. But can businesses defend against ad extortion? The answer is not really, unless businesses are willing to pay a big expense. Instead, the best defense is focusing on stellar customer service — and directing customers and potential customers to Google and Facebook reviews, ignoring Yelp altogether.